

PACD Education and Outreach Committee Meeting
Held Virtually
January 14, 2021 | 10:00-11:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Committee Chair Laura Anderson

Committee members in attendance: Trudy Alexander, Laura Anderson (Chair), Jody Groshek, Emma Grubbs, Joan McCarty, Nate Pritchard, Emily Shosh, Kelly Stagen, Cathy Yeakel

Guests in attendance: Brenda Shambaugh, Molly Burns, John Dryzal, Chelsey Ergler, Adam McClain, Wendy McRoberts, Chris Snyder, Shirley Snyder, Yuri Plowden, Janet Creegan, Bonnie Young, Nicholas DiPaolo, Shannon Wehinger (notetaker)

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. There was a quorum.

Welcome and Introductions

Committee chair Laura Anderson welcomed everyone to the meeting including new members Emily Shosh and Nate Pritchard.

Approval of July 2020 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on July 13, 2020 were provided to members for review.

It was moved by Kelly Stagen and seconded by Cathy Yeakel to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on July 13, 2020. Motion carried.

PACD Updates

PACD Director of Communications & Education Shannon Wehinger reported the progress on the DEP Environmental Education Grant Project. Three sign templates were created and are available via Google Drive (<https://bit.ly/3mHIHSw>). Topics are fish structures, macroinvertebrates, and buffers. Lackawanna County Conservation District requested a smaller size sign template. PACD is working with Lackawanna County to incorporate the cost of developing a smaller sign into the DEP grant costs. The original templates are 36"x24". Lackawanna is requesting a 24"x18" size.



Shannon also reported on the Fall Public Service Announcement that was released on fall leaves. An animated explainer video was also developed. For 2021, we would like to put out scripts for two new topics. The committee suggested proper pet waste disposal, pollinators, invasive plants, fertilizer on lawns, plastic use awareness (water bottles, etc.), not mowing to the edge of the stream/buffers including what to do with grass clippings and using rain barrels.

My Growing Tree Program

Jody Groshek, McKean County Conservation District's Communications & Outreach Director, shared videos and photos of the My Growing Tree Program that she adapted into a kit that teachers can use in the classroom during COVID-19. My Growing Tree has been a program of Potter and McKean Conservation Districts each year for at least the last 10 years. The program is geared toward first graders and they get a seedling to take home and plant with their families. When the pandemic hit, Potter and McKean districts had to figure out how to continue the program. They came up with a kit with lesson plans to continue the program without district staff on-site. The lesson includes items that come from trees (maple syrup, toilet paper, etc.) and some games Jody came up with. The kids get a certificate with planting instructions at the completion of the program. Getting surveys back was a challenge this year but the Google survey worked better than the paper version.

Five videos lasting 5 minutes each were created for the program for teachers to show to students. They were provided by on a USB. Jody shared two of the videos with the committee.

Emily Shosh, Potter County Conservation District's Communications and Outreach Advisor, talked about creating the videos with Jody. They used a surface pro tablet with the installed software to do editing and uploading to YouTube. They are working on ideas for winter right now.

McKean County also has kits for watersheds, invertebrates, and wildlife.

Education & Outreach Efforts during COVID-19

Attendees discussed the programs they are holding during COVID-19.

Pike County is doing online education using Facebook and Instagram. A virtual municipal workshop was held as well as a stormwater seminar.

Columbia County reported that the district developed a better backyard certification program using lunch and learn webinars. A lunch and learn on invasive species was also held. The district developed a Halloween themed nature trail at night. Families were



spaced out five minutes apart. Webinars will continue including live staking, climate change resiliency, and women in agriculture.

Potter County created a story map on animal signs. A public account with ArcGIS is free.

McKean County recommended reaching out to the STEM specialist at the school's Intermediate Unit as a resource.

New Business

Emily Shosh agreed to present on using story maps at our July committee meeting.

Jody Groshek mentioned the online Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) training with Envirothon for teachers with Act 48 credits. Please keep promoting Envirothon so we don't lose teachers and schools.

Yuri Plowden (NRCS) asked districts to reach out to NRCS for help with virtual teaching sessions for Envirothon on soil.

Adjourn

It was moved by Jody Groshek and seconded by Kelly Stagen to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

